

Request for Proposals, 2000-2
Joint Fire Science Program

U.S. Department of the Interior

Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Land Management
National Park Service
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Geological Survey

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

February 15, 2000
(Closes August 15, 2000)

Fuels Treatment Demonstration Sites

Request for Proposals

by the
Joint Fire Science Program

A. Program Description

The Joint Fire Science Program (the Program) is a partnership of federal wildland management agencies with a need to address problems associated with accumulating wildland fuels (combustible material, generally living and dead plant materials) on lands administered by the USDA Forest Service and four bureaus in the Department of the Interior (Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). The U.S. Geological Survey is also a cooperator. For the purposes of this Request for Proposals, "wildlands" are considered to be forests, shrublands, grasslands, and associated wetlands and riparian areas.

Wildland fuels have been accumulating during at least the past half century due to wildland fire management policies, forest management and other wildland management practices, and other factors. The additional fuels contribute to intense fire behavior and increase the resistance of fires to control. Consequently, property and natural resources have been destroyed, costs of fire management have escalated, fire dependent ecosystems have deteriorated, and the risks to human life are high.

The Congress, agency administrators, Program partners, and others have recognized that the accumulation of wildland fuels must be reduced in order to reduce the human threat from fire and maintain natural resource values. Congress directed the Department of the Interior and the USDA Forest Service to develop a Joint Fire Science Plan to provide science-based support to land management agencies as they address this need. The Program was developed based on the Joint Fire Science Plan to help ensure that cooperating Federal land management agencies expedite scientifically sound, efficient, systematic, and effective solutions and monitoring programs that cross agency jurisdictions and fuel types.

The Joint Fire Science Plan addresses four issues critical to the success of the fuels management and fire use programs. These issues are:

1. The need to develop and implement consistent interagency fuels mapping and inventories with common classifications and resolution within ecosystems.
2. The need to evaluate and compare fuels treatment practices and techniques, including prescribed fire, thinning and other mechanical methods, increased utilization of biomass, and no treatment.
3. The need to develop treatment schedules, determine the frequency of subsequent treatments, and coordinate treatment schedules among agencies.

4. The need to establish compatible interagency processes and procedures for monitoring, evaluating, and reporting fuels treatments.

For further background on the goals of the Program, those considering submitting proposals and other interested parties are encouraged to review the Joint Fire Science Plan which is available via the Internet at: http://www.nifc.gov/joint_fire_sci/jointfiresci.html. In addition, the Program issued Requests for Proposals in June 1998 and February 1999 and subsequently selected and funded 46 projects. Lists of the funded projects can also be found at the above website.

This Request for Proposals contains one Task Statement for which proposals are requested. Non-Federal proposers are asked to ensure that a Federal cooperator participates in development and submission of proposals. Proposals must be received by the close of business on August 15, 2000 to be considered at this time. Questions should be directed, and proposals forwarded to:

Dr. Bob Clark
Program Manager
Joint Fire Science Program
National Interagency Fire Center
3833 S. Development Ave.
Boise ID 83705
phone (208) 387-5349
facsimile (208) 387-5960

Electronic submissions are acceptable provided they are followed by a hard copy of the title/signature page with original signature(s). The signature page must be received by August 15, 2000. Please e-mail electronic proposals, in Wordperfect, Microsoft Word, or Rich Text Format, to Bob_Clark@nifc.blm.gov.

B. Area of Interest for Proposals

This Request for Proposals (RFP) contains one task. The RFP will remain open for six months following date of issuance.

***Task 1:** Develop small administrative study sites and/or demonstration sites in various ecosystems across the United States that can serve to demonstrate and evaluate various fuels treatment practices or techniques and their environmental effects and cost effectiveness.*

The Governing Board of the Joint Fire Science Program envisions a series of administrative study sites developed by land managers in various ecosystems/fuel types across the United States that can be used to address unique or locally specific fuels management issues and/or support the national effort to study the consequences of fire and fire surrogate treatments. Sites could also be developed or used to demonstrate different wildland fuel management options, associated costs, and ecological effects to agency and elected officials, research scientists, fuels management practitioners, and other interested persons and groups. Documentation that site access will be available and documentation of treatments is required. Site integrity must be ensured for a minimum of seven years to provide for review and site visitation. Sites should be of adequate size and contain sufficient treatment replications to ensure sound conclusions and recommendations. The study design process will include written review by qualified scientists. Administrative studies must document, when applicable, treatment method(s), effects, costs, results and conclusions. Proposals are solicited for all major fuel and fire regime types, including forests and woodlands, shrublands, grasslands, and wetlands. A minimum of one treatment and a control must be demonstrated on each site. Joint Fire Science Program funding will not be awarded for the operational installation (treatment cost) of the sites but will be limited to the scientific and monitoring component including: study design, data gathering, analysis, reporting and technical transfer of information. Signs and other forms of on-site treatment interpretation are encouraged. Partnering with cooperators to broaden or expand the sites is also encouraged. The Governing Board anticipates that the scientific and monitoring component for such demonstrations can be accomplished for \$25,000 to \$100,000 per site.

C. Format for Proposals

Overview of the Proposal Format

The proposal should specify rationale, objectives, methodologies, and deliverables in sufficient detail to allow an informed peer to assess the proposal's validity in addressing the task statement in the Request for Proposals (RFP). The proposal should also identify criteria by which success of the project can be determined. The proposal text and accompanying tables and figures should be limited to 7-10 pages. Complete annual and total budgets and a timeline for completion of demonstration site completion must be included, as well as a mechanism for "technology transfer" to appropriate end users. Contributed funding (for example, how will the treatments be funded) should be identified. The proposal also provides a record of management responsibility and accountability for various aspects of the project.

Title Page

The following format should be used for the title page (not to exceed 1 page):

Project Title:

Principal Investigator(s):

Affiliation:

Address:

Telephone/Facsimile Number(s):

E-mail:

Duration of Project:

Annual Funding Requested from the Joint Fire Science Program: \$ _____

Total Funding Requested from the Joint Fire Science Program: \$ _____

Abstract: Summarize the proposed project in a brief abstract not to exceed ½ page. The abstract should include the justification for the proposed project in relation to the task statement in the Request for Proposals, objectives, appropriate methodology, and applicability of results.

E-mail or facsimile proposals are acceptable provided that the e-mail or facsimile transmission is followed by a hard copy of the title page with original signature(s). If hard copy is provided only one copy is necessary.

Introduction

An introductory section should include:

- 1) Project Justification. A summary of the issue(s), why the project needs to be done (relevance to task statement in the Request for Proposals), and benefits derived.
- 2) Project Objectives. A statement of the project objective(s) must be clearly stated and measurable. This should include a brief statement of what information will be provided at the end of the project and how the information or product can be used to demonstrate various treatments to officials and interested publics.
- 3) Background. This section includes a concise review and synthesis of existing knowledge and previous research or other pertinent background.

The introductory section is intended to provide peer reviewers and the Governing Board with evidence that the proposed work is applicable to the task statement in the Request for Proposals. Although the literature may be extensive, the synthesis should generally include reference to no more than about 8-10 of the most important and/or most relevant sources.

Materials and Methods

This section should describe procedures proposed for conducting the project in sufficient detail that a knowledgeable reviewer could understand the process and that a peer could replicate the project. A brief description of the study site(s) (as applicable) should be included.

Project Duration

Proposals will generally not be funded for longer than three years from date of selection and award, although requests for extensions or additional work may be considered.

Budget

The proposed budget should be provided in sufficient detail to identify indirect costs and related surcharges, to separate labor costs from operational costs, and to identify salaries associated with funded scientists or other funded full-time employees. Annual costs should be provided. Separate line items for "capitalized" equipment should be included.

Deliverables

Provide specific details on the information or product(s) that would be provided by the proposed project, and realistic time tables for delivery dates. It is expected that reports and other written materials will include an electronic version suitable for distribution, posting, etc. Descriptions in English units, with metric equivalents in parenthesis, are suggested. Annual progress reports are required.

Technology Transfer

It is imperative that information and site access be available to managers, officials, and other interested parties. Therefore, each proposal should include a description of how relevant information and site access would be made available.

Qualifications of Investigators

It is anticipated that demonstration sites would be developed by land owners/managers and technical specialists in cooperation with scientists and appropriate officials. Please include a statement of qualifications for the principle specialists and scientists, and a statement of commitment by the appropriate land owners/managers to support and protect the demonstration site.

Checklist for Proposal Submissions

Does the proposal:

- * include an introduction or background section that includes the specific objectives of the project and describes how the proposed work is relevant to one the task statement in the RFP?
- * include a list of cooperators and their proposed contribution, including the original signature of the principal investigator and an authorized signature from a cooperating federal unit (See Proposal Format, Title Page)?
- * include a relevant Curriculum Vitae or other description of credentials of the Principal Investigator(s) which demonstrates ability to complete the proposed work?
- * include a brief review and synthesis of related past and current literature and work?
- * include an adequate description of the specific location of the proposed work?
- * include a description of the materials and methods of the proposed work including (as appropriate) experimental design and statistical analysis(es)?
- * include a detailed annual and total budget, including identification of salaries and indirect costs?
- * include a “Justification of Need for Salary Support,” approved by appropriate authority, if needed? (See Salary Policy Section)
- * include a description and cost of equipment which needs to be purchased to support the work?
- * include a list of deliverables with proposed dates of delivery?
- * include a technology transfer mechanism?

D. Review and Evaluation of Proposals

The following factors will be considered in reviews and evaluations of proposals to the Joint Fire Science Program:

1. How well does the proposal address the task statement in the RFP?
2. Does the proposal follow the requested format and include all the requested information?
3. Will the proposed work provide information or products that are useful across agency jurisdictions, fuel types, and geographic areas?
4. Does the proposal provide for adequate transfer of information or products, consider general availability and usefulness of proposed technology, and, as appropriate, provide for a feedback mechanism to the study team for product testing and improvement?
5. Does the proposal provide for adequate collaboration among agencies, between fire and land management personnel and researchers or other collaborators, and between disciplines to ensure broad integration of existing knowledge and approaches as well as applicability of results and recommendations?
6. Are study approaches or design and statistical analysis(es) appropriate and adequate to meet stated objectives?

7. What are the qualifications of the team to do the proposed work? Are adequate institutional resources and support available?
8. Are proposed timeframes and budget reasonable and adequately justified, including budgets for proposed sub-agreements?
9. If formal cooperative arrangements are proposed (e.g., with universities or other non-federal organizations), is there evidence that these will be feasible and agreeable to the cooperators?

E. Indirect Costs and Salary Policy

Indirect Costs

The Program recognizes the need of participating organizations to recover reasonable indirect costs. Indirect costs up to 15 percent (for the unit performing the work) may be included in proposals without detailed justifications, however, any indirect costs exceeding 15 percent must be justified. Similarly, indirect costs in excess of 10 percent on pass-through arrangements from federal units to cooperating federal or non-federal units must be justified. The Governing Board of the Joint Fire Science Program reserves the right to negotiate budget amounts and deliverables (including indirect costs over 15 percent) with proposing organizations.

Salary Policy

Normally, salaries of permanent full-time federal employees are expected to be provided by their agencies. This is also true of university faculty on 12-month tenure-track appointments. These employees are already fully funded by their institutions. However, the Governing Board recognizes that there can be mitigating circumstances arising from the need to fill in behind these employees when they are reassigned to Joint Fire Science Program funded activities, or due to policies of individual organizations. In such cases, the program may agree to fund salaries of permanent employees. A brief justification must be included in the proposal, and the justification must be certified by an appropriate institutional authority, other than the Principal Investigator or other cooperator on the proposal, at the employee's organization or institution. The format provided below should be used for the certification. In addition, permanent employee salary costs must be explicitly identified in the project budget. The Program requires no special justification (other than a brief description of the need for the position in the budget justification section of the proposal) for funding temporary or term employees, post-doctoral employees, or graduate or undergraduate students.

Certification to the Joint Fire Science Program
Justification of Need for Salary Support

I hereby certify the attached Justification of Need to provide temporary salaries for full-time permanent employee (s)_____ (*list name of employee(s)*) is necessary and appropriate to enable him/her (them) to fully and directly participate in the proposed project.

I understand that salary funding for this/these employee(s) directly involved in the proposed project is temporary and will not be provided beyond the duration of the proposed project.

Signature_____

Date_____

Title _____